

Gossett Is Chm. Emeritus Of Fox Exec. Committee

NEW YORK—William T. Gossett has been elected chairman emeritus of 20th Century-Fox' executive committee, it was announced by Dennis C. Stanfill, chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

Gossett, who retired from the Fox board of directors May 20, is senior partner of the Detroit law firm of Dykema, Gossett, Spencer, Goodnow & Trigg.

Stanfill said that Gossett had reached mandatory retirement age on the 20th-Fox board, but that he will continue to provide counsel to the company.

Stanfill said, "William T. Gossett, who joined the 20th-Fox board in 1969, has given unstintingly of his time and energy. He assumed leadership, both informally and officially. He played a key role in the restoration of the company to its current, strong state. We are all grateful to him for his wisdom and courage."

Blackmer Johnson Retires From 20th-Fox Board

NEW YORK — H. Blackmer Johnson has retired from the 20th Century-Fox Film Corporation board of directors, it was announced by Dennis C. Stanfill, chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

Johnson, who reached mandatory retirement age, was corporate secretary of 20th-Fox for six years until Dec. 31, 1974. He has been associated with the company for 30 years.

Stanfill said that Johnson will continue as a consultant to 20th-Fox. "We are extremely pleased that we will be able to utilize the valuable services of Mr. Johnson, who for many years has played an important role in the company."

Jerry Esbin Is Appointed Para. Mgr. of Operations

NEW YORK—Jerry Esbin has been appointed manager of branch operations for Paramount, it was announced by Norman Weitman, senior vice-president in charge of domestic distribution.

In addition, Esbin will oversee and implement collections for the corporation from theatrical film rentals.

Esbin's new executive position with Paramount will utilize his broad experience in the areas of distribution and exhibition. Before coming to Paramount, Esbin was with American Multi Cinema as a film buyer for the Northeast area. He previously had been with Columbia Pictures, first as branch operation manager, then as Eastern division manager.

At Paramount Esbin reported to Weitman May 27.



Jerry Esbin

ABC Holds Meeting to Acquaint Press With Theatres and Leisure Groups

By JOHN COCCHI

NEW YORK—American Broadcasting Companies, known mainly for its television and radio broadcasting, has a Leisure Activities division which may be lesser known but which covers a wide range of enterprises. Because of the nation's expanded leisure time, recreational activities have increased and, late last year, ABC divided its Leisure Activities department into two Leisure Groups: Group I, consisting of music and publishing and Group II, which includes over 250 motion picture theatres in the Southeast and Southwest.

To acquaint the press with its Leisure Groups, ABC held an informal "overview" on Friday, May 23 at the executive offices here. The presentation consisted of talks and slide and film examples of the multitude of interests in which ABC is involved, preceded by a cocktail party and followed by a buffet luncheon.

Divisions in Group II

Leisure Group II is headed by president Walter A. Schwartz, who reports directly to ABC president Elton H. Rule. The complete list of divisions within this group is as follows: ABC Scenic and Wildlife Attractions, including Silver Springs and Weeki Wachee Spring in Florida; The Wildlife Preserve in Largo, Md., (near Washington, D.C.); the Historic Towne of Smithville, New Jersey (near Atlantic City); Seven Seas Sealife Park in Arlington, Texas; the ABC Entertainment Center in Los Angeles; and ABC Theatres. The division also controls the Silver Springs Bottled Water Co., in Florida.

P. Harvey Garland, based in Jacksonville, Fla., has been president of ABC Theatres since 1972 and has spent his entire career with the company, beginning as an usher in 1934. He worked his way up to president of ABC Florida State Theatres, Inc., in 1968. When he became president of ABC Theatre Holdings Inc., he had charge of all 435 theatres in which ABC had an interest. By the end of 1973, ABC Great States, ABC North Central, ABC Michigan, ABC Intermountain and ABC Theatres of California were sold. At present, ABC Theatres operate in 11 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. During the presentations, Schwartz mentioned that ABC Theatres originated from the Paramount Theatres of the 1950s.

Expect 273 Screens by Yearend

Since 1972, some 60 screens have been added to ABC Theatres through building and acquisition, but a figure around 255 theatres remained constant due to the divesting of some houses. However, a total of 273 screens is expected by the end of 1975. Garland said that it is ABC's policy to go after the top two or three films to

insure long runs. He did admit that such major films as "The Towering Inferno" and "The Godfather Part II" were not performing as well as last year's "The Exorcist" and "The Sting," thus commenting on a statement made earlier in the week at the ABC shareholders' meeting. Attributed to president Rule, the statement was that there were no real blockbusters so far this year, referring specifically to ABC Theatres.

ABC Entertainment Center in Century City is described as a city within a city. Jack Easton, vice-president in charge of the center for two years, is a former child actor with vast business experience. Virtually all of the office space has been rented, as well as much of the commercial space. The Shubert Company operates a legitimate theatre and Plitt Theatres runs the twin movie house. The Los Angeles Playboy Club is also on the premises. The Los Angeles Filmex, the largest film festival in the world, was held recently at the center, where 80,000 came to the two-week festival.

Variety Clubs Int'l Moves Offices to New York City

NEW YORK — The new offices of Variety Clubs International have been established in New York City, it has been announced by Monty Hall, president of the global show business organization. This coincides with the retirement of George C. Hoover as international executive director and the appointment of Morton Sunshine as his successor.

Up to now, Variety International headquarters had been maintained in South Miami, Fla., for the past two decades. The new offices will be located in Tower 58, Suite 23C, 58 West 58th St., New York City 10019, phone (212) 751-8600. Emile Sparkman, head of VCI's accounting department in Florida for the last five years, is moving to New York as Sunshine's assistant.

It was also announced by Hall that membership in the 41 worldwide Tents increased to 9,590 member barkers with 110 new barkers added to the roster during the month of April. He emphasized that Variety was embarking on an effort to broaden its membership throughout all segments of show business.

During April, Los Angeles brought in 31 new members, leading all other Tents. Buffalo followed with 25, Toronto with 13, Dallas with 12 and Honolulu with 10 new members.

Madden Leaves L-T Films

HOLLYWOOD—Bill Madden, former vice-president and general sales manager of MGM, has terminated his services with L-T Films effective immediately. Madden will announce his new plans at a later date.